

Remarks in Santa Barbara, California November 1, 1996

The President. Good morning. Thank you very much. Thank you. Can it really be November? [Laughter] Thank you so much, Mayor Miller, County Superintendent Naomi Schwartz, President MacDougall, Senator O'Connell. And an alumna of this school, your State Superintendent of Schools, Delaine Eastin, thank you for being here.

I am delighted to be back here. As all of you know, I think, our family came here on a little vacation after the '92 election. I hope this will bring us good luck in the next 4 days. I'm glad to be here.

I want to thank Walter Capps for running again for Congress after 1994. As some of you may know, I have more than a passing interest in this race because his daughter, Laura, works for us at the White House. And if there were a popularity contest among White House employees, she would probably win it. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. I know from her that he should be elected, quite apart from everything he has done. Let me say, Walter Capps lost a very close race in 1994, about 1,000 votes. It would have been easy to walk away from a disappointment like that, but he came back. He had a serious accident. It would have been easy to walk away and say, "Well, someone else should take up this battle," but he came back. That's the kind of commitment and courage and fortitude this country needs in the United States Congress.

And last year, when his opponent joined the Gingrich-Dole revolution—

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. —and voted for an almost unbelievably destructive budget for America, one that would have cut environmental enforcement drastically, made it more difficult for us to take further actions to protect our environment, the first cut in education in modern history, including student loans and Head Start—

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. —repealed the guarantee of health care we had provided for 30 years to poor children; to middle class families with members with disabilities to allow them to care for their family members, let them live at home,

and maintain their middle class lifestyles; to our seniors in nursing homes, even to repeal the very standards of care we impose to protect people in nursing homes.

When that happened and I vetoed it, they shut the Government down. And they said, "You have to accept everything in our budget, or we will just keep shutting the Government down." And the people who led the way were those first-year Members of Congress, like Mr. Capps' opponent. They said, "We want everything." I said, "Well, there's a provision in this budget which would allow corporation managers to raid their workers' pension funds. Don't we have any memory? Look what happened in the eighties to the pension funds." In 1994, finally I got through the last Congress a bill to protect the pensions of 40 million working Americans. I said, "Are we going to go right back around and do this all over again?" "Yes, shut the Government down."

I said, "Well, there's a provision in this bill, while it gives me a tax cut at my income level—which I don't need—until we balance the budget, this bill would actually raise taxes on 8 million of the hardest working Americans, people working for very modest wages—trying to raise their taxes? You're going to take away their present tax credits and raise their taxes? Can we take that out?" "No, shut the Government down."

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now there's an attempt to develop a little short-term amnesia among the electorate as we get closer to the elections: "Please forget that; forget that." [Laughter]

You have a big choice to make in this race. Walter Capps is a good man, a brave man. He shares your values; he shares your dreams. I hope you'll send him back to Congress.

Ladies and gentlemen, in just 4 days we will elect the last President of the 20th century and we will choose the first President of the 21st century. As Walter Capps said, I do believe we're at one of those magic moments between hope and history, when we have the opportunity to both have unprecedented prosperity and discovery and adventure and move closer to the values and the ideals which we all say we believe

in. But it depends upon what vision we choose. And it depends on what strategy we choose.

There are so many young people here in the audience, and I thank you for being here, because this is about you. And I want to ask you to do something tonight. Before you turn in when you go home, take just a couple of minutes and see if you can ask yourself and answer this question: What would I like my country to look like when we cross that great bridge into the 21st century? What would I like my country to be like when my children are my age?

I know what I want. I want the American dream alive for every person who's willing to work for it. I want America to keep being the strongest force for peace and freedom and prosperity in the entire world, even if we have to make some controversial decisions to help end wars like Bosnia or throw dictators out of Haiti or continue to move forward in other areas. I know I've been criticized for some of the things I've tried to do, but I know that there are no Russian missiles pointed at the children of America for the first time since the dawn of the cold war. And I want an America that is coming together instead of being torn apart. All around the world people are being divided by race, by religion, by ethnicity, by tribe, killing each other and each other's children because they cannot get along. Look in this crowd today. In this crowd we say, you can be an American; it doesn't matter who you are, where you're from, anything else about you. You've just got to believe in our values, obey the law, and do a good job.

Now, we have followed a simple strategy: opportunity for all, responsibility from all, an American community that includes all. Four years ago, the people of California, in very difficult conditions, took that strategy on faith. Today there is a record. You don't have to take our word for it when you see the differences in our vision, that we want to build a bridge to the 21st century; they want to build a bridge to the past. They want to say, you're on your own; we want to say, to use the words of my best friend and someone I'm reasonably close to, it does take a village to raise a child and to build a future.

Now we know which side is right. Over the last 4 years, incomes have been rising, jobs have been coming in, the average family income has gone up \$1,600 after inflation in the last 2 years

alone. We've had the largest drop in child poverty in 20 years; the largest drop in inequality among working people in 27 years; the lowest rates of unemployment, inflation, and home mortgages in 27 years; the highest rates of homeownership in 15 years; record rates of new businesses formed every year, including new businesses owned by women and minorities. We are moving in the right direction.

The crime rate has gone down for 4 years in a row and, in the Nation as a whole, is at a 10-year low. The welfare rolls have been reduced by 1.9 million. Child support collections are up 50 percent, \$4 billion a year for deserving children all across America. We are moving in the right direction.

In the closing days of the last Congress, we raised the minimum wage for 10 million people. We said to 25 million people—25 million people—you can't have your health insurance taken away from you anymore just because you changed jobs or someone in your family has been sick. We said that insurance companies can no longer force hospitals to kick mothers and newborn babies out of the hospitals in 24 hours.

We gave more help to small businesses, every one in the country, making them eligible for tax cuts if they invest more in their businesses. We helped people get health insurance if they self-insure by giving them greater tax benefits for doing that. We helped people to take out pensions and to carry with them from job to job if they work for small businesses. We're moving in the right direction.

We gave families who will adopt a child—and there are so many out there who need adoption—a \$5,000 tax credit. We are moving this country in the right direction. And we had the biggest increase in Pell Grants in 20 years and added 200,000 work-study positions to the Federal Government's efforts to help people go to college.

Just a few days ago, we learned that our annual growth is about 3 percent; that real incomes are rising at about 5 percent, which is a very healthy rate after 20 years of virtual stagnation; that we have the highest rates of new investment in our country, almost 19 percent, since President Kennedy was President.

We have protected the air, the water, the land. We set aside in the Mojave Desert the biggest natural reserves south of Alaska in the history of America with three national parks,

converted the Presidio to a national park, set aside 1.7 million acres in southern Utah in the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, moved to save Yellowstone Park from a gold mine, and helped to protect the environment. And we stopped our friends on the other side when they tried to lift the ban on offshore drilling.

Now, during this whole campaign, a lot of interesting things have happened. I told someone yesterday and the day before, my opponent, Senator Dole, said that we had the worst economy in America in 20 years, but just 2 weeks before that he said we had the worst economy in 100 years. [*Laughter*] So I think he made the case for reelection; not everyone can make up 80 years in 2 weeks.

Now, the truth is, back in February he admitted we had the best economy in America in 30 years. And you know California, while we've still got a long way to go, is way better off than it was 4 years ago. We are moving in the right direction.

And today we got some more good news. Unemployment held steady at 5.2 percent in the country, 210,000 new jobs in October. That makes 10.7 million new jobs in America since I took the oath of office. We are moving in the right direction.

It is time for my opponent and those on the other side to stop all this doom-and-gloom talk about America. In spite of what he wants you to think, when it comes to the economy, the sky is not falling. The sky is the limit, and we're going after it.

But this election should be about what else we have to do to build our common bridge to the 21st century. And I'd like to ask you all to sort of ride along with me for a moment and let me discuss an issue that hasn't been discussed enough in this campaign, and that is whether we will reform our system of politics by finally passing meaningful campaign finance reform legislation.

When I ran for President 4 years ago, I said I wanted to give our Government back to the people. I wanted a Government to represent the national interests, not narrow interests, a Government that would stand up for ordinary Americans. And I have worked hard to do that. When I became President, I barred top officials from ever representing foreign Governments when they leave our service. I barred top officials from lobbying their own agencies for 5

years after leaving office. The days of the revolving door, when top trade negotiators left to work for the very countries they were negotiating against, are over.

We passed the most sweeping lobby reform legislation in 50 years. From now on, professional lobbyists must disclose for whom they work, what they are spending, and what bills they are trying to pass or kill—for the first time ever. I challenged the Congress to ban gifts from lobbyists, and they did that.

We passed a line item veto so Presidents can strip special-interest pork in general legislation. We passed the motor-voter law, which has enabled millions of people to register more easily and will add millions to the voting rolls next Tuesday. We passed the Congressional Accountability Act and then the White House accountability act to apply to Congress and the White House the same laws that we pass and impose on everyone else in America.

All these actions will serve to make Washington work better for you. But there is still more to do, and special interests still have too much say. We have clearly one more big job to do: curbing the power that special interests have in our elections. Everybody knows the problems of campaign money today. There is too much of it. It takes too much time to raise. And it raises too many questions.

The parties are engaged in an escalating arms race. In the past 2 years—listen to this—in the past 2 years, the Democratic Party and its House and Senate campaign committees have raised \$241 million. The Republican Party and its Senate and House campaign committees have raised \$399 million. Raising that much money strains the political system. We have played by the rules, but I know and you know we need to change the rules.

I proposed a tough campaign finance bill when I came into office, but the Congress would not pass it. The Republicans have been reluctant to give up their access to big money. Led by my opponent, they filibustered the bill I proposed to death. In fact, campaign finance reform has come before the Congress six Congresses in a row, and my opponent filibustered it five times. He blocked the last one right before he left office.

In 1995, I met with Speaker Gingrich at a townhall meeting in New Hampshire. And when we were there a citizen asked us if we would create a bipartisan commission to come up with

a campaign finance reform proposal that we would then try to pass. We both agreed. I thought it offered a real chance for bipartisanship and action. And frankly, I was excited about it. I even appointed two distinguished citizens, John Gardner and Doris Kearns Goodwin, to help get it started. But the Republicans walked away. My opponent now says he would support such a commission. But when we had a real chance to succeed, he wouldn't help us start it.

Now we have a chance—we had a chance to take bipartisan politics—or partisan politics out of this issue this year as well. I supported a strong bipartisan bill introduced by one of my opponent's strongest supporters, Senator John McCain, and Senator Fred Thompson and Democratic Senator Russ Feingold from Wisconsin. They've got a good approach. It's based on principles I advocated back in 1992. We should curb the power of special interests by restricting political action committees and dramatically reducing the amount they can give to candidates. We should ban contributions from lobbyists to those who lobby. That's what I believe. We should end the big money contributions to political parties known today as soft money. We should ban corporations and unions from directly giving to parties to help Federal candidates they can no longer help directly. And for the first time ever, we should restrict the virtually unlimited amount of money individuals can now give to parties. We should set voluntary spending limits for candidates. And we should give free TV time so that all candidates who observe the voluntary limits—but only those who observe the voluntary limits—can talk directly to voters.

And parenthetically, I might say we made a beginning on that approach this year, and I would like to thank those networks which offered Senator Dole and me the opportunity to speak directly to the voters at various times in 90-second or 2-minute messages. I thought that was a very good public service. It's the beginning of seeing how we might do it on a sustained, regular, disciplined basis, because we have to have access to the voters and if you have to purchase it all, it is extremely expensive. So the voluntary spending limits and the free time must work together.

This is a good approach. It was endorsed by Common Cause and every other major reform group. It was bipartisan. It was tough. It was

real reform. But my opponent opposed it. He refused to bring it to the floor for a vote. And after he left Congress to run for President, the Republican leaders finally allowed the legislation to come to a vote, and then they killed it.

There is one more issue that reform must deal with. Today it is legal for both parties to receive contributions from corporations that are completely owned by foreign corporations or interests and from individuals who live in the United States legally but are not citizens. Many of them have lived here many years and have employees and interests in this country. The Democratic Party has raised money this way, and so has the Republican Party. In fact, the Republican Party has raised much more money in this way than the Democrats, but that's not the point. It's time to end this practice as well.

Now, McCain-Feingold would end all corporate contributions, so it would take care of that part of the problem. But we should also end contributions to either party from individuals who are not citizens. There are many immigrants who play an important role in our country, and all of you in California know I have done my best to defend legal immigration and the rich contribution it makes to the United States of America. But if the essence of a democracy is its citizens decide, and only citizens can vote, then I believe only citizens should be able to contribute. That is not anti-immigrant, it is simply stating the fact: Those who vote should finance the elections that they vote in.

There is no more excuse for waiting. I tried to form a commission, but now is not the time for a commission. This is a time for action. Once again, I call upon the Congress to enact real reform. Delay will only help those who don't want to change at all. When McCain and Feingold introduce their bill next year, I will introduce it with them. Real reform will mean a Government that is more representative, not less. And I ask you, every one of you, to help us to pass real, meaningful campaign finance reform in Washington. Will you do that? [*Applause*]

Now, let me say one other thing. We should also understand that in a recent case the Supreme Court has made it impossible to enforce some of the strictest limits. And this bill will not solve all of our problems. Even as it establishes limits, it will still allow, because of the Supreme Court's decisions, a millionaire or a

billionaire to spend endless sums running for office. It may be that further measures are needed. But in the meantime, that's not an excuse to do what we can. We must act, and we must act now.

Let me also say to you that your vote will decide a lot of things in this election. It's far bigger than President Clinton or Senator Dole, even bigger than Congressman Capps or Congresswoman Seastrand. This election is really about how we are going to proceed into the 21st century as a people. Your vote will decide, for example, whether we keep the economy growing by balancing the budget while protecting our investments in education, the environment, and research and technology and Medicare and Medicaid or whether we adopt an even more radical version of the budget I vetoed that will blow a hole in the deficit, raise taxes on 9 million people, and require bigger cuts than the ones that I vetoed last time.

Your vote will decide what we do about helping families to balance the demands of work and childrearing, the biggest challenge many families face. I'm proud of the fact that we passed the Family and Medical Leave Act and let 12 million people take some time off from work when a baby was born or someone in their family was sick.

Now, this is an honest difference between the two parties. My opponent led the opposition to it, said this year it was still a mistake. Well, we have some evidence now. Twelve million times it's been used, and during that time we've had record new business formation and 10.7 million new jobs. The reason is, America is stronger economically with happy, productive people in the workplace who aren't worried sick about their children at home. That's why.

I'd like to see us expand family leave. I think people ought to be able to take a little time off from work to go see their children's teachers twice a year or take their kids to regular doctor's appointments. I believe people who earn overtime and have problems in the family, a sick spouse, a sick child, a sick parent—I think people who earn overtime ought to have the right to decide whether to take the overtime in money or time with the family. We'll be a stronger country with a stronger economy when people feel better about fulfilling their responsibilities to their family members. And I want you to help me do that. Walter Capps will. Will you help us? [Applause]

We passed the beginning of health care reform, but our balanced budget would help people who are between jobs keep health insurance for their families for 6 months. It would add another million people to the ranks of insured—children. It would work with States to add another 2 million working families to the ranks of insured. There are still too many people without insurance. It would give free mammograms to women on Medicare. It would give help for respite care for the over 1½ million families that are struggling nobly and bravely and humanely to care for a family member with Alzheimer's. Our budget pays for it; theirs doesn't. Will you help us do that? [Applause]

We passed the V-chip for new television sets, got a TV rating system voluntarily developed by the entertainment industry, secured an agreement for 3 more hours of educational television, doubled the amount of funds going into the safe and drug-free schools program, and for the first time ever took action to stop the big tobacco companies from advertising and marketing tobacco to children.

Now, on the V-chip, on the safe and drug-free schools program which has helped so many children to stay away from drugs and trouble, and on the tobacco issue, my opponent disagrees. All these things can still be reversed. I think we need them as building blocks in our bridge. Will you help me keep them and do them into the 21st century? [Applause]

We passed the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, a bill to put 100,000 police on the streets, "three strikes and you're out." Our opponents, Senator Dole and the Speaker, they led the fight against that crime bill. And now they don't understand why every major law enforcement organization, for the first time ever, has endorsed the Clinton/Gore ticket for reelection.

We know how to lower the crime rate. We've fought for the 100,000 police; Senator Dole led the fight against it. When they won the Congress, they voted to abolish the program, even though the crime rate was going down. Then they tried to cut the program. We've only funded half of those police officers, and I'd like to finish the job, but you have to help me. Will you do it? [Applause] They actually tried to repeal the assault weapons ban, and Walter Capps' opponent voted to do that.

Audience members. Boo-o-o!

The President. Now, you know, 2 years ago, frankly, they were just paying a debt 2 years

ago. That's why a lot of them won. They went out in a lot of these rural districts in places like my home State, where half the people have a hunting or a fishing license or both, and they said, "There they go again. They're going to take your guns away. That's what the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban mean."

Well, 2 years later, those same people who voted that way know the truth. Not a single hunter or sportsperson in America has lost a legitimate weapon, but over 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers can't get a handgun because of the Brady bill. And we just extended the Brady bill so that now people who've beat up their spouses and their children can't get it either. And now that we have fought off the attempt to repeal the assault weapons ban, we ought to make sure they don't come back with that. And we ought to ban bullets that are designed for one purpose only, to pierce the bulletproof vests of police officers. They are wrong, and we ought to get rid of them. Will you help us finish this job? *[Applause]*

We moved a million nine hundred thousand people from welfare to work and passed historic welfare reform legislation that says we will guarantee to poor people, and to the children especially, health care, nutrition, and more child care than ever when people move from welfare to work. But able-bodied people must move within 2 years from welfare to work. But the law doesn't do anything. You can't require people to go to work unless there are jobs for them to take. I have a plan to create another million jobs to help move people from welfare to work. Will you help us implement that plan? *[Applause]*

There is much more to do on the environment. A lot of these plans for these national parks and other preserves are just beginning. We have to finish the job. We cleaned up more toxic waste sites in 3 years than they did in 12. But we still have 10 million kids living within 4 miles of toxic sites. We'll clean up the 500 worst ones. We want to be able to say in the 21st century, all our children can grow up next to parks, not poison. Will you help us do that? *[Applause]*

And most important of all, your vote will decide—as the president said here when we started—whether we put ourselves squarely on the line for giving every single American access to world-class education. I am proud of the fact that we have increased Head Start; passed the

national service program; given schools all over California and the rest of the country opportunities to try new and exciting ways to achieve excellence, like the charter movement; that we passed a new college loan program which lowers the cost of college loans and gives young people a chance to repay them as a percentage of their income so people can never be bankrupted by borrowing the money to go to college. I'm proud of the increase in the Pell grants and 200,000 more work-study positions. But it is just a beginning. There is more we need to do. And I need your help.

Forty percent of our 8-year-olds still cannot read independently by the third grade. Part of it is we're having a new wave of immigration. A lot of those children's first language is not English. But that will be cold comfort for them if they move through school unable to continue to learn. I have a proposal to mobilize AmeriCorps volunteers and 30,000 other reading specialists to go around the country and get a million volunteers to teach our children to read. And I want 100,000 of those 200,000 new work-study slots to go to young college students who say, "I'll go. I'll teach young people to read." Will you help us do that? Will you help us? *[Applause]*

Schools all over America are bursting at the seams with the largest number of children in history. We have the first plan ever to help school districts to build new facilities and repair old ones so our kids have decent learning environments. We have a plan to hook up every classroom and every library in every school in America to the information superhighway by the year 2000. Will you help us do it? *[Applause]*

We do want to say, in 4 years we can make at least 2 years of higher education as universal as a college diploma is today, simply by saying you can deduct from your taxes, dollar for dollar, the cost of the typical community college tuition if you go and make your grades and you're a good citizen. Will you help us do that? *[Applause]* I want to let families save in an IRA for their retirement but withdraw tax-free if the money's being used for education, health care, or first-time homebuying. Will you help us do that? *[Applause]* And I believe we should give families a tax deduction of up to \$10,000 a year for the cost of any college tuition at any level for Americans of any age. Will you help us do that? *[Applause]* Now, that will build a bridge to the 21st century.

And finally let me say, as you look around this vast sea of people today, I ask you to think again of how we are going to do this and whether we are going to practice the politics of division—what some gleefully call wedge issues—or are we going to say, “We want to go forward together”?

Think about how sad it is that in the Holy Land, the home of the world’s three great monotheistic religions, people still cannot lay down their hatred of one another. Think how sad it is that in the home of my ancestors, Ireland, full of young, brilliant people bursting at the seams for new opportunity in Northern Ireland, people still cannot lay down their religious differences and their arguments about incidents that occurred centuries ago. Think about how sad it is that in Bosnia, people who are biologically indistinguishable killed one another’s children with reckless abandon. Or in Rwanda, Burundi, the Hutus and the Tutsis—both of them with no money, really, to speak of to further their dreams and help their children—instead of cooperating, slaughter each other at record rates.

In America we must fight against that. That’s why we had to stand against what happened at Oklahoma City. That’s why we had to stand against the church burnings and the defacement of synagogues and mosques and Islamic centers.

And that’s why we have to stand together for a different future.

If you want all these things I talked about, in the end it will to some extent be an affair of the American heart. We must be willing to say, I tell you again, that in this country all we need to know about you is whether you embrace our Constitution, our Bill of Rights, our Declaration of Independence; whether you are willing to show up for work or school tomorrow; whether you are willing to give your neighbors the elbow room to pursue their personal lives and their freedom; whether you are willing to treat people, even those with whom you dramatically disagree, with genuine respect if they are law-abiding, hard-working citizens. And we ought to say, if you’re that way, we don’t need to know anything else about you. You’re part of our America, and we’re going to build a bridge together to the 21st century.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:44 a.m. at Santa Barbara City College. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Harriet Miller of Santa Barbara; Naomi Schwartz, superintendent, Santa Barbara County schools; Peter MacDougall, president, Santa Barbara City College; State Senator Jack O’Connell; Delaine Eastin, State superintendent of schools; and Walter Capps, candidate for California’s 22d Congressional District.

Remarks in El Paso, Texas *November 1, 1996*

Thank you. Hello, El Paso! Can you hear us in the back? Can you hear us behind the press back there? I always wanted to come back to El Paso. Congressman Coleman asked me to come back to El Paso before he left office. He didn’t tell me if I came back the whole town would come out to see me, but I’m glad to see you. Thank you.

Thank you, Ron Coleman, for the great service you have rendered to this district, to Texas, and to your country. We’ll miss you. Thank you, Governor Briscoe, for your speech, your work, the power of your example, your faith, and your energy. I too believe, like you, if we all show up on Tuesday, the result will be good and

we will win and move this country forward into the right direction.

Thank you, Judge Mattox, Texas Democratic Chair Bill White, LULAC President Beline Robles. Ambassador Talles is here somewhere. Where are you, sir? Raise your hand. Hello, it’s good to see you. Thank you for being here. State Senator-nominee Eliot Shapleigh; thank you, Victor Morales, for your long, courageous effort to prove that an ordinary American citizen’s voice can still be heard in the 1990’s. Thank you. Give him a hand. *[Applause]*

Thank you, Silvestre Reyes, first, for the boots; I’ll wear them, both pairs, with great pride and great memories of this day. Thank